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I. United States

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1. ROK-DPRK Talks

The Associated Press ("KOREA TALKS TO CONTINUE AMID DISPUTE OVER AID, REUNIONS," Beijing, 04/17/98) reported that talks between the DPRK and the ROK broke off Friday, but the two sides agreed to meet again Saturday. ROK Deputy Unification Minister Jeong Se-hyun stated, "We have many things to provide North Korea to ease their agricultural agonies. We want to gain something from the North Korean side in return." Chun Kum-chul, Jeong's counterpart from the DPRK, told reporters separately that he wanted fertilizer aid treated as a humanitarian issue without conditions, adding that family reunions could be taken up in talks by Red Cross officials from the two sides.

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2. PRC Missile Proliferation

The Los Angeles Times (Jim Mann, "CHINA REJECTS JOINING MISSILE- CONTROL GROUP, U.S. OFFICIALS SAY," Washington, 04/17/98) reported that unnamed senior US administration officials said that the PRC turned down a proposal by John Holum, director of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, that it join the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) when US President Bill Clinton visits Beijing in late June. In exchange, the PRC would have gained greater access to US commercial space technology. Clinton administration officials reportedly had hoped that an agreement bringing the PRC into the group could be the centerpiece of the president's trip. Bates Gill of the Monterey Institute of International Studies explained the PRC's objections to the MTCR by saying that PRC officials "consider the [group] a cartel. It's led by the United States. And membership would crimp their room for maneuver in dealing with various countries like Pakistan and Iran." Gary Milhollin of the Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control argued, "I think it's a good thing the Chinese didn't agree to join. If they did, we would have dropped the barriers to exports to China, when there was no reason to think China would change its export behavior." However, Gary Samore, the US National Security Council's leading expert on weapons proliferation, stated, "Obviously, the United States is not going to provide assistance to China's missile program."

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3. US-Japan Military Cooperation

Reuters ("US PROPOSES MAKING WEAPONS WITH EUROPE, JAPAN," Washington, 04/16/98) reported that US Undersecretary of Defense Jacques Gansler on Thursday called for increased cooperation with Europe and Japan in the production of new weapons so that the allied nations can fight wars together more easily. Gansler stated, "As you think about future wars we are most likely to have coalition wars." In such coalition wars, Gansler argued, the allies must have weapons that are compatible with one another, and they should have common command and control.

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4. Japan-Russia Summit Meeting

Reuters (Brian Williams, "JAPAN LAUNCHES MASSIVE SECURITY FOR YELTSIN VISIT," Kawana, 04/17/98) reported that Japan has mobilized a 5,000-strong security force for Russian President Boris Yeltsin's weekend summit with Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto. The report said that the biggest worry of security officials is protests by right-wing groups demanding the return of the Kuril islands. A police spokesman said right- wingers had applied for permission to drive 200 loudspeaker vans on area roads to broadcast their message. He added, "We will do all we can to

prevent any incidents, both accidental and planned." About 10 people have already been arrested for pasting leaflets on buildings. Recently, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin lauded improved Russian-Japan relations, saying in the weekly Moskovsky Novosti newspaper, "The spirit of Krasnoyarsk fostered a new, overwhelmingly positive atmosphere that has no precedent in our bilateral relations this century." However, Toyoshi Eto, the leader of one Japanese nationalist group, said that Russia was not interested in closer ties with Japan, only in getting money to develop Siberia. Professor Shigeki Hakamada, a Russian expert at Aoyama Gakuin University, warned, "The illusions both Russia and Japan have about each other could lead to both countries being disappointed and disillusioned. That could cool the relationship and wreck it by the time we get to the year 2000."

II. Republic of Korea

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1. ROK-DPRK Talks

ROK negotiators continued to press the DPRK to agree to the setting up of a reunion center for divided Korean families Friday, but without success. During the 90-minute contact between the chief delegates of the two sides, the ROK proposed that Red Cross talks be held this month at the truce village of Panmunjom to exclusively deal with the family reunion issue. But the DPRK's chief delegate, Chun Kum-chol, insisted that they discuss the issue at the next round of Red Cross talks on the ROK's civil-sector food aid to the DPRK, to be held in Beijing later this year. The two Koreas last month held the fifth round of inter-Korean Red Cross talks on 50,000 tons of corn aid. The sixth round of talks will take place after all the promised corn is delivered and therefore is expected to come sometime in May. The two sides will meet again Saturday to continue to search for a compromise, said Jeong Se-hyun, the ROK's chief delegate. "We will give them till tomorrow to change their stance," he said, giving the extended talks a weekend deadline. (Korea Times, "SOUTH INSISTS ON REUNION CENTER; PROPOSES RED CROSS TALKS BE HELD THIS MONTH AT PANMUNJOM," 04/17/98)

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2. DPRK Aid

The UN Development Program will hold a roundtable conference in Geneva in late May to devise measures to help rebuild the DPRK's agricultural sector, the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said yesterday. The conference was designed as a mechanism for securing the transparency of aid and raising necessary funds through consultations among donor countries and international agencies and the recipients of aid. The UN agency has held roundtable conferences for 35 developing countries over the past decade but not for the DPRK yet. (Korea Herald, "UNDP TO HOLD CONFERENCE FOR NORTH KOREA AGRICULTURE," 04/17/98)

III. Japan

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1. ROK-DPRK Relations

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("ROK-DPRK TALKS STILL DEADLOCKED," Beijing, 04/17/98) reported that the ROK-DPRK official talks on fertilizer aid ended in deadlock on April 16 because neither side

would compromise. Although the ROK wants to prolong the talks and hold an official meeting on April 27, any substantial talks are unlikely and at best will probably only set a date for the next meeting. According to ROK sources, the ROK explicitly demanded that the DPRK clarify the date for the meeting of the separated families by saying, "Unless the DPRK sets up the place for the meeting, we will not provide fertilizer aid to the DPRK." The DPRK, in response, seemed to show signs of agreeing to deal with the issue of separated families through the Red Cross, but the talks saw no agreement because the DPRK refused to clarify the date for the meeting, said the report. An ROK senior governmental official said, "The ROK will neither force nor play up to the DPRK." Jeong Se-hyun, ROK chief delegate, added, "We will not provide unconditional fertilizer aid by any means," according to the report. The report pointed out that given that both the ROK and the DPRK already agreed to the importance of their meeting, their dialogue will surely continue. The report added that considering the closeness of the planting season, the negotiations will likely resume as early as within this month.

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2. Japanese-Russian Relations

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPAN DECIDES TO EXPAND 'VISALESS' EXCHANGE WITH RUSSIA," 04/17/98) reported that the Japanese government decided to add economic experts to former islanders as the groups eligible for so-called visaless travel to the northern territorial islands. Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto will officially announce the decision during his meeting with Russian President Boris Yeltsin on April 18. The report pointed out that the decision will give a boost to expanding Japan-Russia economic cooperation, including paving the way for a delegation of Japanese agricultural experts to visit the islands. The report added that the "visaless" travelers currently officially include Japanese former islanders and their relatives, activists who advocate the return of the territorial islands to Japan, and press reporters.

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3. Northeast Asia Security Dialogue at APEC

The Asahi Shimbun ("PRIME MINISTER PROPOSES JAPAN-US-PRC-RUSSIA SECURITY DIALOGUE AT APEC," 04/17/98) reported that the proposal by Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto to hold a Japan-US- PRC-Russia security dialogue at the Asia-Pacific Economic Conference slated for November will likely be discussed at the Japan-Russia summit starting April 18. Hashimoto said to reporters on April 16, "Such a non-binding dialogue could occur anywhere. Given that we supported Russia's participation in APEC, we find no other place rather than APEC where Japan, the US, the PRC, and Russia can talk with one another in a rather relaxed way," indicating his positive stance to the security dialogue. The Japanese government will encourage the PRC to participate in the dialogue since the PRC has been cautious about the New Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation. The report concluded that such a security dialogue will not only contribute to peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region but provide a good opportunity for Russia to emphasize its presence as a member of the region as well.

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4. Japanese Nuclear Policy

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("DIET TO PASS DONEN REFORM LAW NEXT MONTH," 04/15/98) reported that the Lower House passed the Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corporation (PNC/Donen) Reform Law on April 14 and that the Diet will likely pass the law next month. PNC has

been under review for reform by the ad hoc PNC Reform Committee, consisting of non-governmental intellectuals and experts, since the fire and explosion accident at a reprocessing plant in Rokkashomura in March, 1996. The law will officially terminate thirty years of PNC's history, and PNC will be reduced to dealing only with development of high-speed breeder reactors and high-level radioactive wastes under the name of the "Nuclear Recycling Development Organization" starting on October 1.

IV. People's Republic of China

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1. ROK-DPRK Talks

China Daily ("KOREAN TALKS BREAK DOWN ON AID DEAL," 04/16/98, A1) reported that efforts to restart talks between the DPRK and the ROK failed on April 15, a day after they collapsed over the ROK's insistence on political concessions in return for aid to the DPRK. An ROK embassy official in Beijing said that the two sides had made contact, but had not agreed to restart the first high- level DPRK-ROK contact in four years.

Wen Hui Daily ("PROSPECTS OF ROK-DPRK TALKS DIFFICULT TO CALCULATE," 04/16/98) carried a report written by Yang Guoqiang, a correspondent for the New China Agency, saying that it is difficult to forecast the prospects of the ROK-DPRK talks because the two sides did not make concessions on issues with important differences. According to the article, there are two key differences between the two Koreas. The first is that the DPRK gave priority to getting fertilizer aid from the ROK, while the ROK wanted to link aid with other issues like the reunion of separated families. The second difference between the two sides is that the DPRK wanted half a million ton of chemical fertilizer, but the ROK only agreed to supply 200,000 tons. Although the two sides did not reach any substantial progress during the talks which started on April 11, analysts pointed out that the talks still had a significant and symbolic meaning.

Jie Fang Daily ("ROK-DPRK TALKS HAVE NO RESULTS," Beijing, 04/17/98, A3) reported that the PRC hopes that the DPRK and the ROK will maintain the momentum of holding talks. PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao said on April 16 that the PRC hopes that the DPRK and the ROK will patiently consult with each other and strive to reach progress which will be beneficial to the improvement and development of relations between the two sides.

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2. Separated Korean Families

People's Daily ("ROK TO AMEND LAWS," Seoul, 04/15/98, A6) reported that within the next few days the ROK would begin to discuss the amendment of national security laws which were criticized by the DPRK. According to the report, the ROK government was considering allowing ROK citizens to send small amounts of money to relatives in the DPRK.

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3. PRC Food Aid for DPRK

China Daily ("AID TO DPRK," 04/14/98, A2) reported that the PRC Government has decided to provide free aid of 100,000 tons of grain and 20,000 tons of chemical fertilizer to the DPRK. According to People's Daily ("DPRK THANKS CHINA FOR AID," Pyongyang, 04/16/98, A6), DPRK

Vice Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Kim Yong-nan asked PRC Ambassador to the DPRK Wan Yongxiang on April 14 to transmit letters of thanks from the DPRK Party and Government for the PRC's aid.

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4. PRC-US Relations

China Daily ("NATION PREPARING FOR CLINTON'S VISIT," 04/17/98, A2) reported that both the PRC and the US are actively preparing for President Bill Clinton's visit to PRC scheduled for late June and early July. PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao said at a regular news briefing on April 16 that US Secretary of State Madeline Albright will visit the PRC on April 29-30 at the invitation of PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan. During her visit, Albright will meet Chinese leaders. Tang and Albright will engage in an in-depth exchange of views on Sino-US relations, preparations for President Clinton's visit, and international and regional issues of common concern.

According to China Daily ("NATION LOOKS FORWARD TO CLINTON'S VISIT," 04/11/98, A1), the PRC attaches great importance to the upcoming visit by US President Bill Clinton. When meeting with US under-secretary of state for political affairs Thomas Pickering, PRC Vice-Premier Qian Qichen cited Clinton's state visit this June as another major event in Sino-US ties. following PRC President Jiang's visit to the US last October. Pickering said that the US also has great expectations for Clinton's PRC visit. He said the US and the PRC share common interests in many issues, such as trade and non-proliferation, which are core issues to be discussed at the summit.

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5. Hu Jintao's Visits to Japan and ROK

People's Daily ("HU MEETS WITH JAPANESE AND ROK AMBASSADORS," 04/15/98, A1) reported that PRC Vice-President Hu Jintao said on April 14 that he would have in-depth exchanges of views with government leaders in Japan and the ROK during his upcoming official goodwill visit to the two countries from April 21 to 30. He made these remarks in separate meetings with Japanese Ambassador to the PRC Yoshiyasu Sato and ROK Ambassador to the PRC Chong Wook-chung. Noting that both Japan and the ROK are good neighbors of the PRC, Hu said the PRC has good cooperative relations in various fields with both countries.

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6. PRC Military Modernization

China Daily ("PLA LAUNCHES NEW ROUND OF EXERCISES," 04/14/98, A2) reported that the PRC armed forces have launched a new round of military exercises to enhance their capability to cope with modern high-tech wars. According to sources with the People's Liberation Army (PLA), the training aims to acquaint PLA officers and soldiers with the means of winning regional wars by employing high-technology. According to the report, the PLA previously launched four massive military exercises respectively in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. This comprehensive military training represents another milestone in the PLA's modernization drive, the report said.

The NAPSNet Daily Report aims to serve as a forum for dialogue and exchange among peace and security specialists. Conventions for readers and a list of acronyms and abbreviations are available to all recipients. For descriptions of the world wide web sites used to gather information for this report, or for more information on web sites with related information, see the collection of other

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